MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN NEW YORK CITY, AUGUST 5, 1931.

The second meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1932, was held at the office of McKim, Mead and White, 101 Park Avenue, New York City, Wednesday, August 5, 1931. The following members were present:

Mr. Moore, Chairman,
Mr. Morris,
Mr. Winter,
Mr. Cross,
Mr. Weinman,
Mr. Mauran,
and Mr. H. P. Caemmerer,

Executive Secretary and Administrative Officer. Also by invitation, Mr. James L. Greenleaf, Landscape Architect, acting for Mr. Vitale, was present. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a. m.

1. DESIGN FOR RESIDENCE AT 2620 QUEBEC STREET: The Secretary presented a design which was submitted by the Inspector of Buildings, District of Columbia, for a residence at 2620 Quebec Street near Rock Creek Park, which is within the area prescribed by the Shipstead-Luce Act.

Mr. Morris and Mr. Mauran inspected the design and regarded it satisfactory. They offered a few suggestions to the architect, which were indicated on the drawing, particularly with reference to relocating certain posts and thereby omitting one post from the center of the porch and making a slight change in the location of the doorway leading to the porch.

2. LANDSCAPE PLAN - ARLINGTON MEMORIAL BRIDGE:

General Plan. Mr. Greenleaf having recently been appointed consulting landscape architect for the Arlington Memorial Bridge Commission, submitted a general plan for the landscape treatment of the plaza at the Lincoln Memorial and the approach to the Arlington Memorial Bridge, the Columbia

Island development, and the approach to the Arlington National Cemetery. The Commission expressed their appreciation of this appointment since it meant a coordination of the individual landscape projects between the Key Bridge and the Highway Bridge and an appropriate landscape setting for the Arlington Memorial Bridge. Mr. Greenleaf explained the plan in detail and said:

"I am simply introducing the subject and then the Commission, Colonel Grant, and Mr. Kendall can discuss matters in detail. This is the architect's original general plan on a scale of 250' to the inch of the layout of the Lincoln Memorial Plaza, Columbia Island, and the entrance to the Arlington National Cemetery. The aim is to make the Commission conversant with the discussion up-to-date, which by no means is final, and let them know how far Colonel Grant's office has proceeded in definitely planning for carrying out the design.

"Now the spirit of this design does not need explanation to the Commission of Fine Arts because they have been over it many times. The points of significance are, of course, the Lincoln Memorial Plaza, and bridge head, the other bridge head plaza on Columbia Island with the treatment of Columbia Island and finally the entrance to Arlington National Cemetery."

a. Columbia Island:

"Speaking of Columbia Island, the significant feature there as it shapes itself in my mind, is a formal treatment on the axis of the crossing, this formal treatment in the case of the cross axis ending at the circles, which have been studied carefully on the ground. These circles as I understand it have now been definitely fixed in position and grade. The circle at the southeast end of the cross arm provides for a connection with the Mount Vernon Highway and the northwest circle connects with the so-called Lee Boulevard. Here also will ultimately be a direct connection with Analostan Island. Each of the cross arms is approximately 1,100 feet in length from axis of bridge to center of circle.

"As to the Lee Highway connection, I seize this opportunity to emphasize the fact that the Bridge should not be allowed to become a traffic bridge. The Arlington Memorial Bridge is essentially part of the park system of Washington and is particularly associated at either end with two of the most significant, even sacred features of the National Capital. The essence of the scheme is this splendid bridge connecting the Lincoln Memorial and the great national cemetery with, on the one hand, the Mount Vernon Boulevard reaching down the river, and on the other, the promised George Washington Memorial Parkway of really magnificent scenic possibilities, passing up stream on the Virginia shore to the Great Falls of the Potomac. In its vital principles this great scheme is simple, grand and beautiful if it is held determinedly to the fundamental basis of the park system and all questions of growing city

traffic problems are excluded. I most respectfully but earnestly submit to the Arlington Memorial Bridge Commission and to the Commission of Fine Arts that here lies the great opportunity to do the really fine thing. I even venture to point out that here lies the responsibility of both Commissions to rigidly exclude the idea of utilizing the Memorial Bridge as in any sense an entrance or portal into the city for country-wide travel; that here at its dramatic point the scheme of Washington shall not fall short of distinction.

"To be specific, and in regard to the Lee Highway connection, the bridge should not be allowed to ever become a traffic bridge bringing thousands upon thousands of motor people from the Lee Highway into Washington over the Arlington Memorial Bridge, whirling them around the Lincoln Memorial and so into the city. I was one of a meeting in Rosslyn before the building of the bridge was started, to advocate the bringing of the Lee Highway into the city by way of the Long Bridge down stream primarily, with a secondary branch from back of Arlington to the Key Bridge and time only seems to confirm the essential soundness of our position. If necessary, replace the "Long" or Highway Bridge by a new one of double the capacity and even in time, if needed for future growth, parallel the Key Bridge with another and arrange the city streets accordingly, but never cheapen and confuse the distinctive quality of the Arlington Memorial Bridge and its surroundings as the most significant and most grand part of the park system of the Capital City.

"A few days ago we made a personal inspection on the ground with Mr. Moore and officials in Washington of the proposition to carry the Lee Highway straight down the hill along the north boundary of Arlington Cemetery and Mr. Moore expressed what seemed the conviction of all, that it was most undesirable.

"We were told by Major Gillette that to establish this highway or boulevard one and a half miles arbitrarily straight down the Virginia heights at this point to the northwest circle on Columbia Island would mean the expenditure of eight hundred thousand dollars and that to distribute the concentrated slope the promoters contemplated a wooden trestle or viaduct possibly 1,000 feet in length.

"In my judgment all this rigid running of a straight, broad road down the slope, whether it involves a viaduct or not, introduces a most objectionable feature in an otherwise very beautiful landscape.

"At present there is a simple narrow dirt road winding down the slope in this place, adapted rationally, for the most part to the grades. Some more permanent road here will, of course, be needed to feed into Fort Myer and the adjoining property. It can be widened conservatively as a minor park road, adapted to the grades and made an attractive outlying detail of the park system but that is quite a different story from a broad boulevard crudely crashing its way down the heights to the Memorial Bridge.

"As for the treatment of the island itself, the up and down river cross axis is of great significance, and I have expressed the opinion in Colonel

Grant's office that the design here presented should be "keyed up" to the utmost precision as to grade and alignment from circle to circle and for a width well beyond each outside line of the quadruple rows of avenue trees.

"Beyond these outside rows of trees soft modulation of topography in open grassy glades with masses of native trees and bushes lead gently down to the water's edge. During my stay in Washington a few days ago we sailed around the island in a motor boat for a personal inspection of it. Ordinarily the river engineers would build a rip rap wall on uniform lines and have it at uniform height above water with the result that if it was not carefully designed and varied there will be a hard mechanical effect totally at variance with the beautiful natural effect now around Analostan Island, for instance. There nature has been allowed to do its worst but there are now so many overhanging trees and little sedgy nooks on the shore line as to give Analostan Island a most picturesque and altogether charming appearance. It is my desire to see the general scenic effect of Analostan Island, with rather more open treatment in places, reproduced as far as possible on Columbia Island. It would be much finer than a gardenesque artificial park development of close clipped lawn bordered by a uniform rigid river wall."

Colonel Grant said that he is enthusiastically in favor of this.

Continuing, Mr. Greenleaf said: "I trust there may be sympathetic cooperation on the part of the river control engineers to produce this effect. Instead of a uniform stone wall or rip rap of unbroken height, it will be far more preferable to have rocks placed along the shore line to low water level and have them covered with dirt, allowing grass and bushes to grow over them. Let the line project conservatively into the channel in a few places and retreat into the island in others, thus suggesting sedgy coves with shadowing tree masses. This would make it possible to reproduce to a considerable extent on Columbia Island the attractive shore line on Analostan Island. I suggest that at the Columbia Island terminus of the Memorial Bridge there should be a well designed river wall of some architectural significance, extending 100 to 200 feet both ways from the bridge. The transition at the ends of this wall to the lower and unconventional stones along the shore would be hidden in masses of bushes."

Mr. Kendall regarded this an excellent idea. Mr. Kendall suggested in planting on Columbia Island, certain vistas that are now had of the Lincoln Memorial and northward towards Georgetown and westward towards Arlington be preserved. Thus the planting should not be so thick as now prevails on Analostan Island. Mr. Greenleaf agreed to this.

b. Planting at the Lincoln Memorial Plaza:

Mr. Greenleaf said: "The design of the Plaza is in process of decision and the grades are determined. These have been worked out in great detail by Mr. Payne, landscape architect of the Office of Public Buildings and Public

Parks, and are very pleasing. As to the broad effect, I feel confident that in the course of time one of the famous views of Washington is going to be from between the columns of the Lincoln Memorial looking westward over the river.

"Now, if you will imagine for the moment that we are standing there in future years after the planting is matured, the view takes in a broad sweep of river and Virginia shore and all the intervening beauty of plaza, bridge and island, seventy-five degrees of it, sweeping from the tall double rows of elms bordering the great circle of the Lincoln Memorial on the right to the corresponding elms framing in the view on the left.

"In the immediate foreground in the circle of the Lincoln Memorial on either hand but leaving the center of view well open are strong masses of evergreen planting of round headed instead of vertical spire habit. These masses stronger and rather taller than those now at the east front of the Lincoln Memorial, will always be subordinate to the tall elm framing of the scene. In grouping these masses care must be taken not to smother the platform of the Memorial. The masonry must be distinctly seen in places and especially on the Mall axis line, the wall be open to view clear to the ground level. This is very important and, in fact, the time is coming if not here when nearly all of the vines temporarily grown to relieve this platform wall should be rooted out.

"It is thought that from this opposite view on Columbia Island this framing of the Lincoln Memorial by the side groups of evergreen subordinate to outlying framing of tall elms will be equally effective.

"Continuing on our view from between the columns, the center of the foreground view is unbroken clear from the pedestals and tall sculpture of the bridge head, sweeping the length of the water gate to the corresponding pedestals and sculpture at the end of the Rock Creek Parkway. We see only balustrade and opening to the stairs, except that each side of the stairs is a mass of evergreen backing the balustrade and carefully planned to keep low, only in two or three places rising to half the height of the tall pedestals.

"Such in its outlines is the composition and contemplated framing of this view, equally important whether seen from the Lincoln Memorial or from Columbia Island and the Bridge."

Mr. Greenleaf said that while he was in Washington a few days ago he was in conference with experts of the Agriculture Department--among them Dr. Coville and Dr. Mumford. The question arose whether it is possible on account of exposures to plant magnolia grandiflora trees on the Lincoln Memorial Circle with assurance that they will thrive. Mr. Greenleaf said that it has long been his desire that these trees be planted at this location. The magnolia grandiflora is a round headed evergreen of moderate growth with strong dark green foliage and would be very effective for grouping at the

Lincoln Memorial. The conclusion arrived at was that this magnolia, mingled with native holly, can be safely used in that position if properly handled, using if necessary, some temporary evergreen screen trees in points especially exposed until the permanent planting is established.

Some discussion was given to the planting outside of each end of the plaza at the Lincoln Memorial bridge head and the conclusion reached that the elms should not return around the end corners of the plaza for fear of hiding the outside groups of sculpture. Mr. Greenleaf expressed the desire to avoid at these two points a weak, stubby end of the elm tree framing. Mr. Morris suggested that a strong massing of white pine on the slope outside the plaza would meet this difficulty. This, with the evergreen planting each side of the water gate but of somewhat higher tendency repeated outside bridge and park, respectively, to merge into the white pine groups was welcomed by Mr. Greenleaf as a very happy solution.

d. Central Panel.

Mr. Kendall asked that special attention be given to the central panel of the Lincoln Memorial Plaza. Originally he said it was planned to have a fountain at each end; later it was thought one fountain in the center would be sufficient. Now it is proposed simply to have the panel planted with grass. It was generally agreed that to plant the panel in grass would be very desirable as a large plaza simply paved would be extremely hot in summer. Colonel Grant said he thought the panel could be made somewhat larger than shown in the plan and it was his desire to begin paving the plaza but leave the space for the panel covered by dirt and boards, letting the question of exact size and shape of the panel wait for later determination. This would obviate the necessity at this time of spending money for curbs and gutters around the panel.

Mr. Greenleaf demurred at this, expressing the thought that including today, the ideas had gathered to the point where the architect could crystallize them into the best solution and this plaza construction could proceed in one completed job. It would seem most unfortunate, if possibly avoidable, to have part of the plaza left unfinished in dirt and wooden curb for lack of a little further concentrated attention right at this juncture. In this thought Mr. Moore expressed strong concurrence.

Major Gillette called attention to the fine traffic system provided by the plaza development, which he said is counter clockwise around the Lincoln Memorial. Major Gillette said that while motorists will come from various directions there is no point where they will conflict and the traffic will be controlled simply by signal lights. Policemen, bells and whistles will be unnecessary. At certain points in the plaza it might be desirable to have marks placed on the pavement to direct motorists. It was agreed that the panel should be given further study. Mr. Greenleaf said he would like to see a carefully clipped three-foot evergreen hedge three or four feet wide planted at the edge of the panel directly inside the curbing. It was agreed that the space between the outer edge of the Lincoln Memorial Circle and the edge of the panel could be simply 60 feet wide, the same as the width elsewhere of the driveway around the Lincoln Memorial Circle.

Major Gillette brought up the question of a bridle path at the Lincoln Memorial Plaza. The Commission felt that horsmen should be governed by the same traffic regulations that will obtain at the Lincoln Memorial for motorists and that a special bridle path at the Lincoln Memorial Plaza would be undesirable. No objection was interposed for a bridle path to extend from East Potomac Park through the underpass northward towards the Rock Creek Parkway. A scheme was presented by Major Gillette for a special layout of the bridle path as it passes the west end of Constitution Avenue and from there connects with the Rock Creek Parkway. This was approved.

e. Planting of the Avenue to Arlington National Cemetery:

Mr. Kendall presented his original drawing for the treatment of the avenue from Columbia Island to the great entrance into Arlington. This shows an avenue 200 feet wide, bordered each side by what is in effect a hedge of large trees. Just inside from the tree hedge is a strong clipped evergreen hedge nine feet high with niches providing sites for future national memorials. Mr. Kendall said he is most anxious to produce the effect as shown by the picture.

Mr. Greenleaf said that to accomplish this beautiful effect permanently would be most difficult unless the evergreen hedge were so distant from the roots of the trees as to greatly injure the scale, much of the charm lying in the relation of the nine-foot hedge to the wall of tree foliage.

Mr. Kendall remarked that he and Mr. Vitale had made a special study on the ground and decided upon 200 feet for the distance apart of the tree walls.

Mr. Greenleaf felt that to draw in the evergreen hedge away from the tree rows sufficiently for its permanent welfare when the treeswere matured would ruin the scale of the grass panel. He suggested a concrete wall at the right position and height, this wall to be covered if desired with a sheet of ivy. Mr. Kendall welcomed this idea, as also did Col. Grant, who added that the cost of an iron boundary fence that the cemetery authorities would require if the hedge was adopted would offset in some measure any added cost from building the wall instead.

There was some further discussion of spacing the trees, Mr. Kendall again emphasizing his desire to bring about the appearance of the approach avenue as shown by the drawing.

Mr. Morris related his own experience with the use of a hedge close to and under trees:

"In 1910, I transplanted five maple trees, at that time having a height of about 25 feet, as nearly as I can recollect. They are placed a shade over 50 feet apart on a line which forms the edge of a garden terrace with a sloping bank to a field below. The trees were planted at the crest of the terrace and joining them, adjacent to the trunks of the trees and just inside of them, I planted what was sold to me as Siberian or Manchurian privet, which

is very hardy and holds its leaves well into the winter. The hedge has grown robustly, is about five or six feet wide and over 200 feet long, and I have kept it clipped at a height of about four and a half feet. The line of trees runs northwest and southeast and as their branches do not as yet touch each other, there being a space of about eight or ten feet between them, it is true that the hedge receives a certain amount of sunlight in the morning and the afternoon. I have another place where the hedge is under oak trees and does not do nearly so well. This hedge has always done particularly well and is one of the prides of our little garden, and it leaves me to believe that at Arlington if the corresponding treatment were adopted, with the hedge, however, removed 25 to 40 feet away from the bole of the tree, that it would thrive and produce the effect that Mr. Kendall desires. Mr. Greenleaf can tell us whether or not oak trees are prone to cause a souring of the soil around them, and whether maples do or do not have this effect. I am very distinctly under the impression that pine trees do sour the soil. Under my trees, the grass does not do very well and there is a moss-like growth in the grass under the trees."

The Commission felt that the trees are the dominant feature in the composition and for the present the Commission suggested simply planting the trees, leaving the question of the hedge for later consideration.

An extract of this statement from the minutes pertaining to the Arlington Memorial Bridge was sent to Colonel Grant. (Exhibit A)

3. GATEWAYS AND FENCE FOR ZOOLOGICAL PARK: The Secretary submitted a design received from Mr. Ernest P. Walker, Acting Director of the National Zoological Park for new gateways and fence to surround the park, for which an appropriation of $30,000 has been made available. The design indicated that it is proposed to use ordinary steel pickets for the gateways and very ordinary gateposts constructed of stone with a lamp at thetop. For the fence it was proposed to use an anchor chain link fence without top rail. It is planned to have constructed a gateway for each of the four entrances, namely, at the Adams Mill Road, Klingle Road, Harvard Street, and Connecticut Avenue. The gateposts would be 10 feet high, an average of 30 feet in width for the gate, and the fence would be 7 feet high. The fence will extend about 13,500 feet around the park. The Connecticut Avenue entrance has a width of 72 feet and it is proposed to use double folding gates there.

The Commission inspected the design and after consideration decided that there would be no objection to the use of the wire fence as proposed. However, the Commission disapproved the design for the gates and decided that the subject should be submitted to Mr. A. L. Harris, Municipal Architect, for study. The National Zoological Park authorities were informed accordingly. (Exhibit B)

4. WAR-NAVY HOSPITAL BUILDING, HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS: At 10:30 the morning of August 5, at the Commission meeting held in the offices of McKim, Mead and White in New York City, Mr. Arno B. Cammerer, Associate and Acting Director of the National Park Service, accompanied by Mr. Charles E. Peterson, landscape architect of that Service in charge of the eastern division, submitted the exterior design for a proposed new Army and Navy General Hospital at Hot Springs, Arkansas, which is being constructed by the Quartermaster General's office of the War Department, but under the law, being built on national park ground, must be approved by the Service before construction can begin. Mr. L. M. Leisenring, the architect in charge of that construction under the Quartermaster General's office, accompanied Mr. Cammerer and explained the plans.

The Commission liked the general design for the hospital and generally approved the outline and disposition of the parts. They felt, however, that the portico treatment was too elaborate and suggested that the elimination of a lot of the detail shown would simplify it more acceptably and tie it more harmoniously into the main mass of the structure, at the same time saving considerable Government funds, and giving greater value to the tower; it now looks too isolated from the rest of the building. They also suggested the

restudy of the terra cotta screen along the top silhouette along straighter lines to make it more restful.

In answer to Mr. Leisenring's inquiry, the Commission at the conference gave it as their opinion that the use of a light brick, with trimmings of Bedford or similar stone, would be appropriate for the exterior of the building; subject to these changes, the Commission approved the plans.

5. ROSTRUM, ZACHARY TAYLOR NATIONAL CEMETERY: Mr. L. M. Leisenring, Architect of the Quartermaster General's Office, requested the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts as to the type of rostrum appropriate for national cemeteries. In this instance one is to be erected at Zachary Taylor National Cemetery. Mr. Morris and Mr. Mauran inspected the sketches submitted. Mr. Leisenring advised that the national cemeteries cover from five to one hundred acres each and it is usually a problem as to what type of rostrum should be built. Mr. Morris said the location of a rostrum should govern in the matter of type of structure. If the rostrum is built at the end of a vista with trees or the like in the background, it is best to build a wall at the back of the rostrum with the usual pitched roof, which helps to carry the voice. On the other hand if the rostrum is to be built on a level stretch of ground with open space surrounding it, it is best to build the rostrum so as to be open on four sides and with a flat roof. Mr. Leisenring said these suggestions would be appreciated by the Quartermaster General's Office in construction matters of this character.

6. D. A. R. TABLETS FOR YORKTOWN, VA.: While attending a meeting of the Commission in New York City on August 5, Associate Director Arno B. Cammerer and Assistant Landscape Architect Charles E. Peterson of the National Park Service conferred with the architectural committee of the Commission on

the designs for tablets to be placed in Yorktown by the D. A. R., and the following suggestions were made:

Leave the circle off the eagle and increase the size of the eagle to bring it more into scale.

Move the fastening bolts which appear in the shape of stars into the corners, using a rosette design. This will permit the elimination of the stars in the inner part of the frame.

Enlarge the insignia of the D. A. R. to bring it into scale.

In regard to the lettering on both tablets, use rounded letters rather than sharp.

7. SKETCHES FOR MURAL DECORATIONS, AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT BUILDING: In accordance with arrangements made, Captain Gilbert White, mural painter, resubmitted his sketches for the decorations proposed for the Department of Agriculture Building. The Commission gave them special attention. Mr. Morris noted that Captain White had not particularly carried out the suggestions made to him informally a few weeks ago. However, he felt the sketches could be redesigned so as to be appropriate for the Agriculture Department Building. They received Mr. Winter's special attention. Mr. Winter said:

"The sketches submitted by Captain White have been criticized from many angles by various members of the Commission of Fine Arts. The color and pattern are not treated in a decorative way. They are painted as easel pictures would be, with sunlight and shadow, which is inappropriate for a mural painting. The subject matter is poetical. The conception is related to Greek mythology, which is not particularly in keeping with an American building. The scale of the figures in relation to the architecture seems a bit large and the groups at the ends of the painting are so far off the central

group that they can not be conveniently looked at. I do not think that there should be a balanced composition. I think there should rather be a uniform frieze treatment. If the Treasury Department desires that Captain White make further studies, the above suggestions should be noted and the new sketches painted in a decorative manner and resubmitted to the Commission of Fine Arts. Also it would seem that mural paintings for the Department of Agriculture Building might well have for their theme the contribution of America to Agriculture, as Burbank, agricultural machinery, etc." (Exhibit C)

8. SAMUEL GOMPERS AND AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR MEMORIAL: The Commission made an inspection in the afternoon of an enlarged model of the Samuel Gompers and American Federation of Labor Memorial (on a scale of 3 inches to 1 foot) at the studio of Mr. Robert Aitken, 227 West 13th Street, sculptor of the memorial. The Commission noted that Mr. Aitken had made an enlarged model of the small scale model showing the seated figure of Samuel Gompers with allegorical figures in the background that had been approved by the Commission some months ago. The matter was brought to the particular attention of Mr. Weinman, who inspected the model in detail and said he regarded the work very well done. All the members of the Commission present were well pleased with it. Mr. William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, was present during the inspection and said he liked the model very much.

The question placed before the Commission was whether the figure of Samuel Gompers should be cast in bronze and the remainder of the memorial cut in stone or whether the entire memorial should be cast in bronze. After consideration and upon the recommendation of Mr. Weinman, the Commission

decided that the entire memorial should be cast in bronze. Mr. Aitken also favored this.

It was noted that Mr. Aitken had made several alternate small scale models of his design. One in particular showed simply the bust of Samuel Gompers resting on a pedestal with the allegorical figures in the background, the same as on the model heretofore mentioned. Mr. Morris felt that the memorial would be much finer if simply the bust of Samuel Gompers were shown instead of the seated figure. In the seated figure the legs and feet strike the eye before the head of Samuel Gompers is seen; whereas for memorial purposes the characteristic head of Samuel Gompers with the allegorical figures in the background typifying labor should be sufficient.

President Green said, after consideration, that he too felt the model showing simply the bust of Samuel Gompers would be preferable to the one having the seated figure. However, he said that the members of the Council of the American Federation of Labor have expressed an earnest desire to have the man Samuel Gompers portrayed and he doubted whether they would change their opinion in this matter.

The Commission finally approved both models with the recommendation that the American Federation of Labor accept the model showing simply the bust of Samuel Gompers with the allegorical figures in the background, the entire monument to be cast in bronze.

In view of the fact that the American Federation of Labor was meeting in convention in Atlantic City, a report to the Federation was made by telegram. (Exhibit D)

9. SIGN FOR AMERICAN SECURITY AND TRUST COMPANY BUILDING: Messrs. York and Sawyer, Architects, of New York City, resubmitted the question of

erecting a sign on the addition they have built to the American Security and Trust Company Building in Washington, by letter as follows:

July 14, 1931.

My dear Mr. Moore:

I am sorry that I did not make myself clear in my letter of June 19th regarding the sign for the American Security and Trust Company.

When the building was in the early stages of design the owner requested that we make some provision for an illuminated sign similar to the one used by the Union Trust Company for a number of years. We therefore provided a horizontal panel in the parapet of the south wall of the addition (parallel to Pennsylvania Avenue) to take a Neon sign.

As I wrote you on June 19th the owner has forwarded us a letter from the Commissioners rejecting their application for this sign.

As there was no one from this office present at the meeting the owner had with the Commissioners, we are not certain that the Bank presented any alternate suggestion. While we agree with the Commission of Fine Arts that advertising signs should be kept off the buildings along Pennsylvania Avenue, we believe that the sign - AMERICAN SECURITY AND TRUST COMPANY - would not be objectionable if properly treated.

We gather from the report of the Commission that you had made definite rules against illuminated signs. Have you made any against good bronze lettering applied on the wall of the building? Some of the banks lately have installed bronze letters across the face of the building kept out some three or four inches with Neon lighting inside the letters so that they silhouette against a lighted surface at night. Is this admissible?

I am enclosing a blue print showing the sign originally contemplated. We will appreciate any suggestions on your part which will enable us to meet the client's desire to have the building acceptably designated.

Very sincerely yours,
(Signed) Philip Sawyer.

The Commission gave the matter very careful consideration. Mr. Moore called attention to the fact that the Commissioners of the District of

Columbia had disapproved the erection of the proposed sign and thus he felt that the Commission of Fine Arts could not very well improve on that decision. Mr. Moore said signs are becoming a nuisance in Washington and new regulations governing the erection of signs and billboards are about to be adopted by the Commissioners of the District.

The Commission disapproved the suggestion of York and Sawyer for a projecting sign illuminated by the neon lighting system. Attention was called to a simple lighting scheme of the Washington Loan and Trust Company Building at the corner of 17th and G Streets, N. W.

Mr. Colean of York and Sawyer called at the office of McKim, Mead and White and was informed of the decision of the Commission in this matter. (Exhibit E (Inscription to be cut in stone favored)

10. MODEL FOR MONTFAUCON, FRANCE, MEMORIAL: The American Battle Monuments Commission requested the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts again as to Mr. Weinman's model for the World War Memorial at Montfaucon, France, designed by Mr. John Russell Pope, Architect. The Commission made the inspection at the studio of Mr. Weinman at Forest Hills, Long Island, New York. The figure is to be on top of a 180 foot column and will commemorate the Argonne Battlefield. It is the largest of the World War Monuments erected by the United States in Europe. The inspection was made at the request of General Pershing, who felt that the figure heretofore designed by Mr. Weinman was too sombre and seemed more appropriate for a cemetery; whereas General Pershing expressed the desire that the figure symbolize victory. To meet these suggestions Mr. Weinman had placed in the hands of the figure of Victory a torch and the head looked straight forward rather than bowed and resting on one arm. Mr. Mangum, Executive Assistant, of the American Battle Monuments

Commission, who was present, said that he felt the American Battle Monuments Commission would much prefer the new design and he understood Mr. Pope favored it. Dr. Cret, consulting architect of the American Battle Monuments Commission, favored the new model as also Mr. Higgins, representing Mr. Pope's firm.

The Commission felt that both models were very well done and in their opinion either one would be a work of art if carried out, but the Commission felt that the new model brings out the idea of victory as suggested by General Pershing and the Commission thereupon recommended acceptance of it. (Exhibit F)

The Commission adjourned at 5:30 p. m. The Commission were the guests of Mr. Morris at luncheon at the Union League Club.

C O P Y

August 19, 1931.

Dear Colonel Grant:

I have pleasure in sending to you herewith an extract from the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts held at the office of McKim, Mead and White in New York City, August 5, 1931, on the subject of the landscape plan for the Arlington Memorial Bridge. The Commission of Fine Arts concur in the suggestions and recommendations made by Mr. Greenleaf with reference to this project.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed) H. P. Caemmerer,

Secretary.

Lieut. Col. U. S. Grant 3d,
Executive and Disbursing Officer,
Arlington Memorial Bridge Commission,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT A

C O P Y

August 6, 1931.

Dear Mr. Walker:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting in New York City, August 5, 1931, considered the design which you submitted for a fence to enclose the National Zoological Park.

The Commission had no objection to the use of 7-foot anchor chain link fence without top rail, which you propose to use.

The Commission disapproved the gateposts and advised that the matter of designing the gates and gateposts be turned over to Mr. A. L. Harris, Municipal Architect, for study and the preparation of an appropriate design.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very respectfully yours,

(Signed) H. P. Caemmerer,

Secretary.

Mr. Ernest P. Walker, Assistant Director,
National Zoological Park,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT B

C O P Y

August 24, 1931.

Dear Major Heath:

The members of the Commission of Fine Arts again considered the sketches submitted by Captain White and listened with interest to his explanations of his ideas. The members felt that Captain White had not treated the color and pattern in a decorative way, but rather as easel pictures would be, with sunlight and shade, rather than as decorative murals on a wall surface.

He has chosen a poetic conception derived from Greek mythology; whereas it would seem more appropriate to represent in the United States Agricultural Department scenes representing American agriculture. The opportunity to do this simply and vigorously is one that probably will not occur again; and the Commission feel that it should not be missed, but rather should be taken advantage of to the fullest extent.

Coming to details: the scale of the figures in the sketch submitted is large in relation to the architecture and the groups at the ends of the panels are so far from the center group that they cannot be looked at conveniently. A symmetrical composition is not a necessity. An informal frieze treatment might be more interesting.

The Commission understand that Captain White makes his home in Paris. He is doubtless entirely familiar with the methods of the great mural painters as shown in their work in that city, and the principles of mural painting as embodied in those works. We are almost at the beginning of mural painting in Government work. The panels in the Lincoln Memorial well illustrate the use and place of mural paintings as related to architecture. It is a question of harmony between the two arts.

Captain White will understand the matter when he learns the point of view of the Commission. He is too good a painter not to appreciate the position taken--that it is a decoration rather than a picture that is needed.

Very sincerely,
(Signed) Charles Moore,
Chairman.

Honorable Ferry K. Heath,
Assistant Secretary of the Treasury,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT C

C O P Y

August 8, 1931.

Frank Morrison, Secretary,
American Federation of Labor,
The Ambassador Hotel,
Atlantic City, New Jersey.

After inspection Robert Aitken's models for Samuel Gompers Memorial, Fine Arts Commission approve both but unanimously and strongly prefer the one with bust as much more distinguished than one with full figure. The full figure in modern dress is bound to be far less permanently satisfactory than the head and shoulders. The bust shows Mr. Gompers character fully and depicts him at his very best. It also goes much better with the symbolic figures thereby avoiding any incongruity. The sculptor agrees with Commission the entire group should be in bronze.

Charles Moore, Chairman.

EXHIBIT D

C O P Y

August 21, 1931.

Dear Mr. Sawyer:

The Commission of Fine Arts have long deplored the prevalence and insistence of the night sign which has now been obscured by the building you designed. Having thus providentially become rid of that sign the Commission do not feel like advising the District Commissioners to permit one to take its place. The Commission have been working with the Commissioners to restrain and ultimately to prohibit night advertising signs; and they feel that in these efforts they should have the cooperation of the great organizations such as you represent.

Very respectfully,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

Mr. Philip Sawyer,
100 East 42nd Street,
New York, N. Y.

EXHIBIT E

C O P Y

August 13, 1931.

Sirs:

On August 5, 1931, the Commission of Fine Arts inspected the models of the statue designed by Mr. A. A. Weinman to surmount the column designed by Mr. John Russell Pope, architect, to be erected at Montfaucon, France. The Commission had already approved the preliminary sketch of the statue, which they regarded as particularly fine. They now approve the second model, designed to present the idea of the victory accomplished at Montfaucon, as suggested by General Pershing.

Mr. Weinman, a member of the Commission now, but not a member when commissioned to execute the statue, took no part in the judgment. The Commission had the advice of a former member, Mr. James E. Fraser, sculptor.

Respectfully,

(Signed) Charles Moore,

Chairman.

American Battle Monuments Commission,
State, War, and Navy Building,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT F